REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as currently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, and 5 are presently active in this case, and withdrawn Claim 4 also is pending. By the present amendment, Claim 1 is combined with Claim 3, Claim 3 is canceled, and Claim 5 is amended to correct minor informalities. No new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention and Claims 1-3 and 5 were rejected under 35 U. S. C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Spierings et al. (USP 6,045,715, hereinafter "Spierings") in view of Niwayama (JP Application No. 09027469A, hereinafter "Niwayama").

In response to the rejection of Claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, Claim 5 has been amended to avoid the relative language "normal temperature," and instead to state that in the claimed invention a temperature of said first etching solution is higher than that of said second etching solution. Accordingly, the outstanding rejection of Claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is believed to have been overcome.

In light of the outstanding rejection, amended Claim 1 recites that a ratio of the etching rate of the first etching solution to that of the second etching solution is 100:1 or more. Since the etching rate between of the first etching solution and the second etching solution is quantitatively controlled, the etching treatments can achieve both removal of the origins of pits and flattening of the surfaces of the substrate, as disclosed in the specification at page 8, line 24 through page 25, line l.

Spierings and Niwayama both fail to teach a quantitative etching rate ratio between the first etching solution and the second etching solution. Furthermore, Applicants reiterate

that the faster etching rate treatment is performed for removing small defects or micro-cracks from a surface of the glass substrates while the slower etching rate treatment is performed for finely flattening the surface of the substrate. Accordingly, it is not obvious that a temperature of the first etching solution is higher than that of the second etching solution, as only Applicants teach this claimed feature. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the outstanding grounds for rejection have been overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above comments, no further issues are believed to be outstanding, and the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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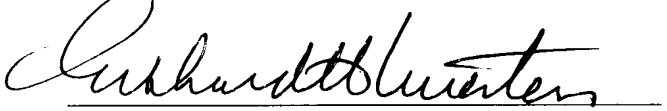
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



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